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22 October 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Special Security Center

SUBJECT : Status of QUILL Project

1. As the Special Security Center had been requested to furnish an opinion concerning the protection of the QUILL product, Lt. Col. John Pietz of General Greer's Staff was questioned about the QUILL status on 20 October 1964 during his visit to the Headquarters Building.

2. According to Colonel Pietz the QUILL Program was generated by a DNRO request of General Greer to orbit a radar satellite quickly in order to test the validity of certain claims. The plan was not for an operational intelligence system, and the end product was not to associate itself with any intelligence function. The orbiting satellite was to look only at a narrow 10 mile beam over the U. S. Although not clandestine in nature Pietz believed that its operation would not be obvious to those on the ground.

3. If the first flight is not successful then a second QUILL shot will be made. However if the first flight is deemed to accomplish the task set out then a DNRO decision must be made on the future of the program.

4. Pietz also advised that approximately three weeks ago General Stewart of the NRO TWX'd General Greer and suggested that an intelligence evaluation team examine the QUILL product. However, General Greer did not look favorably upon the idea and so advised General Stewart that it was too early to bring the intelligence personnel into the picture. The first group of QUILL end-products will not contain intelligence, and he reasoned that if a decision was later reached to conduct an intelligence mission there would be time enough to form an evaluation team.

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5. Pietz stated that QUILL is a side looking radar satellite that will take radar pictures of the U. S. The film in the satellite will result in the synthetic putting together of signal intensities. In the meantime these signals will also be relayed to tracking stations at VAFB or New Boston. The film will be recovered similarly to the CORONA System. Hopefully both films, the one returned to earth and the one received at the tracking station, will be duplicates. After the film is processed (probably at EK) it will be sent to the [redacted] where it will be put through an optical correlator. The product of this operation will then be used to make a radar map. The radar map will then be sent to SAFSP and then to the DNRO where the decision will be made as to the future of the QUILL Program.

6. If the DNRO's decision is to continue the QUILL Program as a post attack radar system, he probably will turn over the operation of the program to SAC. The question then arises as to whether the program will be "black" or DOD Secret. If intelligence is involved the "black" operation will probably prevail. However, if bomb damage assessment is the primary mission, the R&D may be black, but [redacted] since it will be SAC's decision as to when the operation will be launched, it will then be turned over to the white community. According to Pietz they (Program A) have not given these possibilities much thought. If it is decided that the QUILL has any potentiality as to either intelligence or post attack surveillance then a new set of circumstances will be present at that time and a decision rendered as to the control of the product.

7. Pietz also stated that [redacted] has a contract with the [redacted]. Program A is funding the QUILL product through [redacted]. There are approximately 12 to 15 QUILL cleared personnel at the [redacted] and 2 or 3 cleared at [redacted]. Pietz wishes to keep the product in the BYEMAN System at this time. The Chief, SSC agreed that this protection should be utilized until the time comes that the product begins to furnish the community with an intelligence take.

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[redacted]